

DH-001

REMARKS:**Status**

Claims 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 36, and 40 to 51 are pending. Claims 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 36, 40, and 41 have been amended, and claims 25, 28, 31, 33 to 35, and 37 to 39 have been cancelled. Claims 42 to 51 have been added. Claims 23 and 42 are the independent claims.

New Claims

New claims 42 to 51 recite one or more clips of the type recited by the claims that Applicant elected earlier in the prosecution of this case, with the additional feature of "a sheet or tarp, with the sheet or tarp attached to the clips via each clip's hook-and-loop type fastener. Thus, these new claims are within the scope of the elected invention: They include (substantially) the same elements as the clip of the elected invention with an additional limitation, namely the sheet or tarp.

Method Claims

Applicant hereby expressly admit that the claimed inventions, namely the methods of claims 23, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 36, 40, and 41 and the clips and covering of claims 42 to 51, are obvious over each other within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 103. As stated at MPEP § 803, "[i]f there is an express admission that the claimed inventions would have been obvious over each other within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. 103, restriction should not be required. *In re Lee*, 199 USPQ 108 (Comm'r Pat. 1978)" (emphasis added).

DH-001

Furthermore, Applicant again reminds the Examiner of the following requirement set forth in MPEP § 803: "If the search and examination of all the claims in an application can be made *without serious burden*, the examiner *must* examine them on the merits, even though they include claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). The claim inventions are extremely simple. Only one independent claim is present in each group, and those independent claims include a small number of elements. Examining these two groups of claims certainly would not be seriously burdensome. Accordingly, under MPEP § 803, "the examiner *must* examine them on the merits."

In view of the foregoing, examination of all pending claims is proper and is requested.

Art Rejections

The examined claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,672,621 (Moss) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,663,158 (Showalter). Moss is directed to a holding device for a book or binder. Showalter is directed to a golf cart bracket. Nothing in either of these references suggests any benefit of combining a book or binder holder with a golf cart bracket or vice versa. Applicant respectfully submits that this combination is nothing more than hindsight applied in view of Applicant's own disclosure, which is not a proper basis for a § 103 obviousness rejection.

Furthermore, neither a book or binder holder nor a golf cart bracket is pertinent to the clips used as claimed in conjunction with a sheet or tarp. Thus, these claims are believed to be allowable over the applied art. See, e.g., MPEP § 2141.01(a).

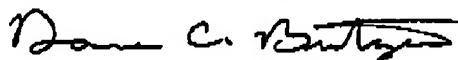
DH-001

Closing

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney can be reached at (614) 205-3241.

Respectfully submitted,



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